

**U.S. Imperialists Create Gangs, Then
Burn Honduran Youth Alive, page 8**

**Israeli Massacres in Gaza Follow U.S. and
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challenge



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June 9, 2004 Volume 38 #36 Suggested Donation \$.50 www.plp.org

Kerry 'Solution' For Bush Iraq Fiasco: **EXPAND WAR**

Bush has become the world's most hated man. For workers, this is a partially positive development. It's good, because the president of the U.S. profit system is now recognized by billions as the face of oil war, mass murder and atrocity. But it's far from enough to serve our class interests. We don't need a break from just one lying, murdering capitalist politician. We need to build a mass international PLP to destroy the entire system and the class of bosses who run it.

The anti-Bush campaign driven by liberal Democrats and Republicans aims at neither peace nor justice. The liberals want to oust Bush not because he's making war in Iraq but rather because his war is turning into a fiasco. On the home front, they oppose him not because his "Homeland Security" threatens a police state but rather because his police state tactics have fallen far short of the results needed to mobilize the country for a long-range future of ever-widening wars.

U.S. imperialism aims to rule the world. The Democrats and Republicans agree on this goal. They further concur on preventing the rise of a rival super-power in Asia, Russia, or the European Union. They see eye to eye on ensuring U.S. domination of crucial Persian Gulf oil as the key to these goals.

However, they differ on tactics. The Bush, Jr. presidency represents a major departure from the basic U.S. foreign policy of all presidents from Nixon to Clinton. Democrat or Republican, every White House from 1968-2000 reflected some alternating between carrot and stick as far as rivals were concerned. In Europe, for instance, the U.S. succeeded in blocking attempts to create a joint European military. But U.S. bosses also agreed to consult their European competitors in numerous forums, like the Trilateral Commission, the G-7 economic meetings and the World Eco-

nomie Forum in Switzerland. This approach allowed U.S. and European banks to rake in huge profits by bleeding dry the workers of the poorest capitalist countries and by "restructuring" the economies of the former Soviet bloc — in other words, by destroying the economic benefits socialism created.

Although the Europeans began flexing their muscles (for example, by building the gas line linking the former Soviet Union to Germany), they never wandered too far from U.S. geopolitical edicts.

But the collapse of the former Soviet Union, which was a tremendous strategic victory for U.S. bosses, also gave rise to the illusion in some sections of the U.S. ruling class that the carrot could be eliminated altogether in favor of the stick.

The Bush, Jr. presidency represents this delusion of grandeur. The Bush crowd figured that without the Soviet Union they had a green light to "assert U.S. power unilaterally, and militarily." (Immanuel Wallerstein, "The U.S. and Europe, 1945 to Today") In one sense they were right. As everyone knows, Bush & Co. invaded Iraq, and no one stopped them. The Europeans, Russians, and Chinese don't yet have the muscle to confront them militarily; and the present level of class struggle is very low.

But disposing of a corrupt, tin-horn army is one thing. Single-handedly conquering and holding a nation of 25 million people and pacifying it for major oil investment are different matters altogether.

The occupation of Iraq has been anything but a cake-walk for the U.S. military, which is undermanned and under-equipped. Morale among U.S. soldiers is very low. Bush's farcical "Coalition" of the bribed and threatened has fallen apart. If

Brown v. Board of Education 50 Years Later Racism Still Riding High

Beware of liberals like John Kerry and his media pals celebrating the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education. That Supreme Court decision was supposed to end one aspect of racism, segregation in public schools. But racism, in its many forms, has only persisted and intensified over the decades. With their phony "long-hard-road" rhetoric, Kerry & Co. try to perpetuate the myth that U.S. rulers will end racism. The hard reality is that the capitalists' profits depend on their ability to super-exploit certain groups of workers, to better exploit the working class as a whole. Racism, based on the scientifically bankrupt idea that varying skin colors make people fundamentally different, is far too lucrative a weapon for the rulers to abandon.

Kerry's May 17 remark in Topeka was pure hypocrisy: "We have to defend the progress that has been made, but we also have to move the cause forward." Kerry's real "cause" is U.S. imperialism, and its domestic agenda includes worsening conditions for all working-class families, especially black ones.

A study by Harvard's Civil Rights Project shows that the rulers' compliance with the Brown decision has dwindled in the absence of a mass anti-racist movement: "Most white students now have little contact with minority students in many areas of the country....We are celebrating a victory over segregation at a time when schools across the nation are becoming increasingly segregated." (Washington Post, 1/18/04) The study noted that in the South "the percentage of blacks attending predominantly white schools increased from zero in 1954 to 43 percent in 1988. By 2001, the figure had fallen to 30 percent."

The biggest money-maker for the rulers remains racist wage differences. By paying black and Latin workers super-low wages, capitalists can depress the wages of all workers. The chart shows black families' income over the last half century fluctuating within a very narrow range but never even approaching two thirds those of white families. Instead of "upward mobility" the figures reveal a system that enforces income inequality.

MEDIAN INCOME: BLACK FAMILIES' AS A PERCENTAGE OF WHITE FAMILIES'	1960—55%
	1965—54%
	1970—61%
	1975—62%
1950—54%	1980—58%
1955—56%	2001—62%

Unemployment rates, which help the rulers drive wages down, follow the same pattern: bad for all workers, and worse for black and Latin workers. For young workers aged 16 to 24 the official rate of joblessness is 9.2% for whites and 16.9% for blacks.

IT'S NOT JUST ECONOMICS — IT'S ALSO POLITICS

Racism is also helping the rulers develop their fascist police state. Arrests and imprisonments of all workers are skyrocketing. But for black and Latin workers, the rate is out of sight. From 1974 to 2001, the number of adults incarcerated jumped from 1.8 million to 5.6 million. In 1974, the portion of the black population serving time was 8.7%, while 1.3% of whites were locked up. By 2001, the share of the total population who had been or were in jail doubled, for both whites and blacks. In 1974, one out of every seven black men, and one in 20 white men, did time. Today, every third black man is, has been, or will be in jail. The same goes for every sixteenth white man. (Statistics come from an August 2003

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Kerry: Send More Troops to Widen War

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anything, the departure of Spanish troops, which came in the wake of elections that unseated a pro-U.S. government after the Madrid train bombings, will hasten the growth of European independence from the U.S. The latest version of the "Road Map to Peace" in the Middle East is crumbling in a hail of bullets and bombs.

The Bush Klan made a further miscalculation. They figured that by waving a big stick in Iraq, they would discourage rulers of other countries from acquiring nukes. The opposite is happening: "...We shall be going from eight to 25 nuclear powers in the next quarter century." (Wallerstein)

Kerry & Co. want a return to the Nixon-Carter-Reagan-Bush Sr.-Clinton

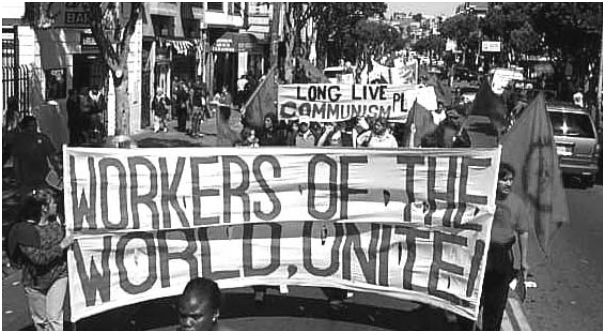
"multi-lateralism." No less a mouthpiece for U.S. profits than Business Week editorializes that the U.S., which "relies on its global ties for economic growth, on immigration for its dynamism, and on foreign capital for its finances cannot long ignore virulent anti-Americanism before facing dire consequences." The editors advance the Kerry-Powell line about "overwhelming force" — sending more troops — and "alliances" — using the UN. ("Iraq: How to Repair America's Moral Authority," 5/24)

But a return to the Nixon-Clinton policies seems highly unrealistic. The cat is out of the bag. The growth of U.S. power has set in motion a chain of events that are slowly but inexorably leading to the rise of the very rivalries U.S. rulers desperately need to prevent. This is the nature of imperialism. The

bosses of the European Union, Russia and China all have compelling profit motives that clash with those of Exxon Mobil, J.P. Morgan Chase, et al. Sooner or later, everyone else comes gunning for the top dog. Capitalism is just a gangster fight on a bigger stage.

Bush may go or stay. The liberals are working overtime to change his tactics. Over the short term, they may succeed. Even if they do, the U.S. military occupation of Iraq and other Persian Gulf oil nations will expand. Over the long haul, conditions are ripening for armed struggle among the major imperialist countries, with increasing U.S. isolation.

The capitalist system has no "moral



authority." Such authority can come only from a society based on working-class aspirations, not maximum profits. As the presidential election campaign develops, our Party can advance by showing in both thought and action that the alternative to Bush is not Kerry or another liberal but rather a lifetime of commitment to communist revolution.✶

Racism Still Riding High Israeli Massacres in Gaza Follow U.S. and Nazi Models

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report of the U.S. Dept. of "Justice.") Over 70% of all U.S. prisoners are black or Latin. The particularly vicious assault on black and Latin people enables the rulers to attack all workers.

The U.S. military is another bastion of racism. The rulers use their racist low-pay and high-unemployment setup to force workers of all backgrounds into uniform and the prospect of killing and dying for Exxon Mobil's profits. While black youth comprise slightly more than 12% of the population, they form 29% of the U.S. Army and 20% of all the services. As a result, "nearly a fifth of the fatalities among U.S. troops in the current war in Iraq are black, which will be the highest cost African Americans have paid in any of America's wars if the trend continues." (Scripps Howard News Service, 4/11/04)

The working class — white, black, Latin and Asian — is suffering the brunt of the casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan. Very few officers have died. But racism, especially in the military, could prove U.S. capitalism's Achilles heel. Working-class soldiers, of every so-called "race," have no class interest in fighting for the rulers' racist system and the greatest interest in rebelling against it. Charles Moskos, a liberal sociologist at Northwestern University openly fears rebellion, because "we're having our working class doing our fighting for us." (Christian Science Monitor, 3/18/03) Moskos speaks for the dominant, liberal wing of U.S. rulers. He helped write both the Hart-Rudman reports and Brookings' "United We Serve," pre- and post- 9/11 blueprints for fascism in liberal guise, and cooked up Kerry's universal national service scheme.

PLP has been in the forefront of anti-racist struggles for 40 years, from its participation in the 1964 Harlem Rebellion to driving the racist "theoreticians" off the campuses to the 1973 Chrysler Mack Ave. sit-down strike to leading tens of thousands against the KKK and the neo-Nazis. A communist-led movement can turn the liberals' fears into reality. Rebellions throughout the working class, including in the armed forces, can help lead to a workers' revolution that will end racism, as no capitalist court decision or election ever could or would.✶

May 19 was "Bloody Wednesday," the day the Israeli Army (IDF) and the U.S. occupation forces outdid each other in massacres. The IDF is waging a mass terror campaign against the Palestinian Rafah refugee camp in Gaza. A U.S.-supplied IDF Apache helicopter attacked a peaceful demonstration of 3,000 in Tel Al-Sultan, murdering several protestors, including children. Simultaneously, a U.S. helicopter gunship attacked an Iraqi wedding celebration near the Syrian border, murdering 40, also including children, claiming these were "terrorists." Wedding celebrants were shooting small arms skyward, a tradition there.

Both U.S. and Israeli authorities said they'll "investigate" the incidents. Don't hold your breath.

On May 15, more than 150,000 people rallied in Tel Aviv's Rabin Plaza, calling on the Sharon government to leave Gaza and begin peace talks with the Palestinians. The recent death of 13 Israeli soldiers and the massive state terror against the people of Gaza led to the protest. It was organized by an umbrella group of the so-called Zionist "left," outnumbering a recent Likud Party protest of 60,000 rejecting Sharon's Gaza pullout plan. But the "left" Zionist rally actually backed Sharon's phony plan to exit Gaza. Thus, Sharon is now the "lesser evil" in the Likud Party!

In 1993, the same Zionist "left" supported the U.S.-brokered Oslo pact, supposedly to settle the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It just brought more repression of the Palestinians.

Then, in 2000, a new Palestinian Intifada erupted. This Zionist "left" swallowed the Likud gang's racist propaganda — "Arabs cannot be trusted."

At the latest rally, Labor Party head Shimon Peres, "Peace Now" honcho Tzaly Reshef, and Amir Peretz, head of the labor federation Histadrut, all supported Sharon's new scheme. These groups still back the apartheid-style occupation of the West Bank Palestinians.

Shortly after the rally, the IDF attacked the Rafah refugee camp, demolishing homes and killing innocent children and others. The IDF terror is blatant enough to

draw condemnation from the European Union imperialists and the UN (with the U.S. abstaining). The Bush administration says, "Israel has a right to defend itself." After all, the IDF's "defense" mirrors the U.S. "defense" in Iraq — both imperialist occupations.

Meanwhile, Arafat's Palestinian Authority and the Arab League have shown their impotence, pleading for "international condemnation" of the Israeli government's "crimes against humanity."

But behind all these nationalist and imperialist "pleas" and "protests" lies a sinister plan. While the IDF attacked the Gaza refugees, Condoleezza Rice was in Berlin huddling with Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Queri. Rice said the meeting was "very productive." Basically it supports Sharon's Gaza scheme: have a Palestinian security group run by the Egyptian Army control Gaza, keeping Hamas and Islamic Jihad under check there. The EU, despite its conflicts with the U.S., also backs this plan.

This endless instability and wave of massacres is what capitalism offers all workers. Unfortunately, there's no real left leadership in Israel nor among the Palestinians. Hamas, the so-called militant Islamist group, was basically organized by Israel in the early 1980s to counter the militant Intifada rebellion then. Some smaller Israeli groups to the left of the Zionist "left," call for a two-state solution: creating a capitalist state for the Palestinians. But these two states — Israel and Palestine — won't solve any of their contradictions. The rulers of both countries will continue fighting each other, and the exploited workers on both sides will still be exploited.

The lack of a real revolutionary alternative is a sign of the times. The collapse of the old communist movement has left the working class and its allies in the Dark Ages. But nothing lasts forever. Palestinian and Israeli workers have a long revolutionary and communist tradition. We must learn from the many past errors and rebuild an internationalist communist movement to fight for the only real solution: a communist society that unites all workers and destroys all the divisions killing them now. It's a long hard road, but it's the only light at the end of this dark tunnel.✶

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

✶PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of the profit system, like wages and divisions of labor.

✶Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

✶Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profit. Everyone will share society's benefits and burdens.

✶Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

✶Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

✶Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✶Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers.

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CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue \$.50. Subscription: \$15. Six months: \$10. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202. June 9, 2004 Volume 38, No.36

PLP Anti-Torture Motion Gains Wide Support At UFT Assembly

NEW YORK CITY, May 19 — Times are changing. Despite opposition from the union leadership, nearly 40% of the UFT (United Federation of Teachers) Delegate Assembly (DA) voted to bring a PLP motion to the floor opposing the U.S. war in Iraq and condemning the torture of Iraqi workers.

The May 12 DA drew just 700 of the 2,400 delegates into a crowded new assembly hall (see box). About 75 teachers entering the meeting took CHALLENGES. Many more who were handed copies of the motion to be brought to the floor expressed interest. People ask for CHALLENGES now

and take them eagerly. This is a far cry from two years ago when 20 papers were considered a "good day."

When we raised our anti-war/anti-torture motion, for a few seconds UFT president Weingarten seemed unsure about letting it go through, but she backed away and the entire motion with all the "wherefores" was read. Immediately a very conservative speaker spoke against it, alluding to the decapitation of the U.S. businessman. A short 5-minute political floor fight arose while Weingarten tried to bring a weaker version of the stronger PLP motion before the

DA. She lost, and the Assembly was asked to decide whether the full PL motion condemning the Iraqi war should be voted on at this meeting. While a majority opposed bringing it to the floor, nearly 40% agreed the PL motion should be voted on.

We must do more work amongst the individual delegates and will try to establish a PL study group with some of them for the next school year. We've been raising PL's ideas at the conservative DA for the past 10 years, and the delegates' thinking is beginning to change. This demonstrates that our consistency and determination to bring the truth of our ideas to the working class will eventually have an effect. ☺



TEACHERS' UNION NIXES UNITY WITH NEIGHBORHOOD PARENTS

The UFT's new office building where we now hold our union meetings is next to Wall Street. A few years ago, when the union leadership proposed to move there, PLP was the only group to oppose it at the Delegate Assembly. We said that to really do a job for the parents and the communities, 100 UFT offices should be established in all five city boroughs. This could help develop real muscle amongst the rank and file of the working class. The leadership then said the decision had already been made and that they just brought it to the delegates as a "courtesy." So much for union democracy.

Students, Teachers Defend PLP'er Attacked by Bosses

NEW YORK CITY, May 19 — Rank-and-file members of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) are defending a PLP teacher who is under attack because of the growing fascist activities of schools Chancellor Klein and billionaire Mayor Bloomberg.

The chaotic conditions in the city's school system this year, and the Klein-Bloomberg assault, have resulted in unsatisfactory observations — "U" ratings — for many teachers city-wide. They're particularly aiming at non-tenured teachers, the easiest to fire.

Their "logic" is that the school system is failing, and therefore it must be the teachers' fault — "not enough teachers are getting unsatisfactory observations." Therefore, "to teach children better," get rid of the "unsatisfactory" teachers, rather than provide smaller classes or any other modern teaching tools. Of course, well-hidden is the ruling class's racist purpose of creating a huge pool of poorly-educated, largely black and Latin youth who will fill millions of minimum-wage jobs or become cannon fodder for the bosses' imperialist wars.

The PLP teacher under attack was tenured under a trades-area license. Then this particular trade was one among many that have been cut from the curriculum in recent years. This is partly because, by law, no vocational class can have more than 24 students. (Regular classes here have a contractual limit of 34 students; many often have more.) Therefore, the need to fund more

teachers for such classes plus the cost of the necessary tools and materials for vocational trades, make them a "luxury" nowadays, even though they provide students with the skills for future jobs as electricians, dental mechanics, plumbers, carpenters, etc.

The PL'er is now teaching under a Social Studies license, currently unprotected by tenure. When the school Principal and Assistant Principal started to harass and "U" rate this teacher, despite his 17 years of satisfactory classroom experience, the school's students and teachers wrote letters to the union president and collected petitions which they presented to the principal and divisional superintendent. They wrote and sang fighting songs on his behalf and displayed numerous acts of common decency towards him. Nevertheless the Principal continued the harassment and she and the Assistant Principal gave him only one satisfactory observation for the year and five unsatisfactories. This is enough to revoke his license and his job.

Teachers turned up at our comrade's room when they thought the administration would be observing him, to be present as independent observers in order to certify his competence.

The PL'er grieved every single "U" rating and the many scathing complaint letters the administration had given him. Four letters were thrown out at a second-stage grievance. But dismissal of the observation reports

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is more difficult.

Some teachers wrote the union president saying that although they disagreed with the PL'ers communist politics, they applauded the many extra things he does for the students and the school. They declared that if the union could not protect such a caring teacher, it has no power at all.

Recently, when this teacher went to a second-stage grievance on one of the unsatisfactory observations, the adjudicator agreed he indeed should have had a pre-observation, since he's at risk of losing his job. Though a mere technicality, it indicates that the union is serious about defending him.

It's clear that this union defense stems from the struggle the rank-and-file union members and students waged on his behalf over the last year. It's certainly important to have friends. ☺

(The following are excerpts from a resolution submitted to the United Federation of Teachers Delegate Assembly, May 12.)

WE MUST STAND TOGETHER AGAINST TORTURE.

The newspapers, radio and TV have been filled with reports and pictures about the torture of Iraqi prisoners in Abu Griab prison by the US military....We shouldn't be surprised — this is business as usual.... The U.S. trained Central American, Iraqi and Iraqi police and military to torture opposition members before [the] government decided...[it] wanted more control over the areas. In fact, this treatment in commonplace in U.S. prisons, especially in Texas under then Governor Bush.

Yet it seems...the government is upset [not] about...the torture, but just...[at] being caught....

The war for oil in Iraq is destroying the lives of workers around the world. U.S. and Iraqi workers are being killed and injured at an alarming rate. We must stand with our working class brothers and sisters to bring an end to this war.

Resolution:

Be it resolved that the UFT take a public position in opposition to the torture of Iraqi prisoners and in opposition to the war in Iraq, and,

Be it resolved that we organize a rally outside the AFT convention in DC to show our opposition to this treatment of our fellow workers.

Presented by UFT members and members of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP)

Link U.S. War on Iraq to Anti-Muslim Racism

CALIFORNIA — Recently 50 students and faculty at an urban community college attended a forum on Israel/Palestine, sponsored by the new campus Political Science Club. Speakers related this issue to the U.S. occupation of Iraq and the racist portrayal of Muslims in U.S. mass culture. "I always hear one thing at my synagogue," said a Jewish student. "This made me think about Arabs in a different way."

This forum was a modest but significant event on a very diverse working-class campus with few student activities. It's been a great learning experience for the Political Science Club. None of the eight student organizers — a multiracial group of young women and men — had ever participated in such an event before, let alone planned one. The club president captured the spirit in her closing remarks: "We can't just watch the news for a few minutes every day. We have to seek out information for ourselves and share it with other people. And we have to act on it!"

Two students brought relatives who now want to join the club although they're not students themselves. "I've learned things here today that I never learned in a classroom," said one, a black health care worker.

Afterwards, several teachers approached the club's faculty sponsor, all with the same message: "This was a very good thing for our campus. Our students need to think more about global issues. They have to hear different perspectives."

"What [one speaker] said about the dangers of nationalism really made sense to me," a Latina student commented. "We have to think more about how we are all alike." She wants the club to meet over the summer "and maybe organize some protests."

A student close to PLP is joining the club, and plans to introduce CHALLENGE to more students. While these are small developments relative to the enormity of imperialist crisis and war, such steps can lead to much bigger ones. ☺

Militant FIAT Strikes Highlight Key Role of Industrial Workers



MELFI, ITALY, May 17 — A 21-day wildcat strike by 5,000 FIAT workers, backed by thousands of auto and steel workers walking out in solidarity, forced some significant concessions from the bosses. The FIAT workers followed the lead of strikers in smaller supply plants, demanding wage parity with the rest of FIAT's workers, an end to the bosses' reign of terror inside the plant and to the grueling rotating schedule that forces 12 consecutive work days without a break. This mass struggle demonstrates the key role industrial workers play in all capitalist societies.

The workers fought FIAT, the union hacks and the cops. The mass solidarity reminded many of the "Struggles of

1968," when industrial workers — inspired by the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants and China's Cultural Revolution — waged militant battles against their bosses and union hacks.

The ten-year-old, high-tech Melfi plant is the most productive FIAT plant ever. It also makes parts for other FIAT plants, and the strike affected production throughout Italy. The rotten working conditions and wages in this southern plant, far below rates in the North, symbolized the social pact among the various capitalist parties (including the fake-left), the union hacks and the bosses. But capitalism's international crisis and Prime Minister Berlusconi's sending troops to support the U.S. occupation of Iraq have workers fighting these attacks. Bus drivers in Milan and Alitalia airline workers have been wildcatting to protect their jobs.

The strikers surrounded the plant to stop scabs. The UIL (social-democrats) and CISL (Catholic) union hacks and the bosses'

media said such actions were "antiquated" and led nowhere.

The cops, ordered to protect scabs, surrounded the picket lines and scuffles broke out. Several workers and cops were injured. The two union federations reached a sellout deal with FIAT behind the backs of the workers. The fake-left Auto and Steel workers union (FIOM-CGIL) didn't sign the sellout, but told workers to return to work while they continued negotiating, but the strikers stood firm.

On April 26, thousands of workers responded to the police attack on the Melfi workers by striking 100 plants in the Turin region and another 100 in Brescia province, forcing FIOM to call a 4-hour nation-wide auto and steel strike on April 28, in solidarity with the Melfi workers. Many struck for a full day. In FIAT's biggest plant, in Turin, 11,000 workers marched shouting, "Long live the methods of Melfi workers!" Similar actions occurred at the Alfa Romeo plants in Pomigliani and Val di Sangro. At FIAT's Sicily plant, workers raised 25,000 Euros for the Melfi strikers.

The Melfi strike cost FIAT over 21,000 vehicles and 200 million Euros in lost production. The company agreed to recognize rank-and-file groups like RSU (international Workers' Commissions) and COBAS (Rank-and-File Committees) as participants

in the negotiations. Average monthly wage hikes of \$126 will give Melfi workers parity with the rest of FIAT in two years. Workers will no longer have to work back-to-back weeks of night shifts and the maximum consecutive working days will be 10. Seven holidays were won, and there will be a moratorium on the company's long-standing disciplinary measures. Mass meetings approved the settlement by a 77% "Yes" vote.

But like all reform victories, they are fleeting and the bosses and union hacks are already planning to take it back. During the intensifying world capitalist crisis, FIAT, like all auto bosses, must increase exploitation of its workforce to compete with its rivals in the world market.

Despite a tremendous history of militant struggle, FIAT workers are trapped on a capitalist treadmill. But their actions create the atmosphere where the PLP can grow and develop a mass base for revolutionary communism. Only communist revolution can end imperialist war and capitalist crisis.

Without industrial workers, capitalists cannot produce anything. The union hacks and fake leftists serve the bosses. Workers can run society without any of these parasites and war-makers. ☸

SBC Walkout Sold Out By Losing Patriotic Strategy

CHICAGO, IL May 24 — After a four-day strike, SBC Communications reached a tentative contract covering 100,000 technicians, operators and customer service representatives of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) in 13 states. The contract also seals the fates of thousands more in Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin, members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical workers (IBEW). Their contract expires June 26.

SBC has the highest profit margins in the telecommunication industry. It recently bought AT&T Wireless in the largest recorded cash purchase in history. Last year alone SBC generated an \$8.5 billion profit, while outsourcing 20,000 jobs to U.S. non-union companies and to India, the Philippines and elsewhere. This is especially true for jobs in high-speed DSL, business data systems and WiFi Internet access.

Now SBC claims it can only remain competitive by slashing active and retired workers health benefits! This is the logic of capitalism, especially in times of war and growing fascism. SBC is doing what it must to cut costs, lower wages and maximize profits — the golden rule of Wall Street's finance capitalists to whom SBC bosses must answer.

The CWA and IBEW misleaders have already sacrificed jobs, wages, pensions and extra time off. The new 5-year war-contract calls for a measly 2% wage increase and lump-sum payments that will be eaten up by higher health insurance and prescription costs. There'll be no layoffs of current workers, but new hires are on their own.

The union leaders emphasized the issue of outsourcing jobs to India, around the line of "American Jobs for American Workers." This is a sure loser. Instead of fighting other workers for the bosses' crumbs, we should be uniting will all our brothers and sisters against ALL bosses. The Nazis had a similar slogan in Germany before World War II. Waving the bosses' flag only ties us to U.S. imperialism's slaughter in Iraq and to John Kerry's Democrats, who are attacking Bush for not sending even more troops to secure their oil empire.

At best, the union leaders only sign agreements legalizing our exploitation. At worst, they're willing accomplices with U.S. imperialism, attacking workers here and worldwide, helping the bosses fuel their war machine.

PLP fights to put the international working class in command, from Chicago to Calcutta. Through this contract struggle we have kept our eye on the prize. More SBC workers are reading CHALLENGE and contributing to the class struggle. The current war-contract, like the war itself, will only make us more committed to our goal.

Exchanging EU for U.S. Imperialists Won't Help Latin American Workers

MEXICO CITY, May 24 — The 3rd Summit of rulers from Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union (EU) will meet in Gualajara next week. Its alleged theme is to alleviate the area's extreme poverty. But capitalism's international crisis only intensifies the exploitation of the working class. This conference will sharpen the rivalry between the European and U.S. imperialists in this region.

Other imperialists are taking advantage of the U.S.'s quagmire in Iraq (see page 1) to penetrate what the U.S. considers its backyard. Brazil's President Lula just concluded a visit to China to expand trade between the two countries. China is importing all it can from Brazil and Argentina.

Mexico's President Fox is one ruler who remains faithful to the U.S. version of globalization and free markets. Even so, he's also seeking to diversify Mexico's economy, making deals with the European imperialists.

Europe's bosses need to expand. They've already

admitted the former Soviet bloc countries into the EU, whose economy is growing only 1.5% per year, not the expected 4.6%. UE Commissioner Chris Patten said its integration with Latin America is a top priority. The EU is already Latin America's second biggest trading partner, the exchange doubling to 53.7 billions euros from 1990 to 2002. The EU is already the leading trading partner of MERCOSUR (the Argentina/Brazil-led common market).

Europe's bosses are also challenging the U.S.'s main weapon — the military — in the region, with France sending troops to Haiti after the overthrow of Aristide being part of that plan. Lula has promised to send Brazilian "peacekeepers" there as well.

Exchanging one imperialist master for another is no answer to the misery and super-exploitation of workers anywhere. We don't need more Lulas or Chavez's; we need more revolutionary communists to fight all forms of capitalism; with workers' power. Join PLP in making this a reality. ☸

PLP Youth Lead Fight vs. War Recruiters

BROOKLYN, NY, May 22 — Bush says more troops are "needed" in Iraq. Where will they come from? Using rising youth unemployment and the resulting "economic draft," the U.S. military's steady invasion of our high schools and universities is a major factor making the current imperialist adventure in Iraq possible. The presence of these recruiters impelled about 60 people to gather in a local church to expose them at a forum titled, "From Brooklyn to Baghdad?"

Young PLP'ers set the tone in their opening speeches, placing the role of military recruiters in the context of the general crisis of capitalism, its effect on education and imperialist war. They drew rousing applause. When a local politician tried to drum up support for Kerry, he was heck-

led and received scant approval.

The highlight of the event came when two young recent veterans revealed that many of their fellow soldiers do not support the war. It was clear that the "mighty" U.S. Army is depending on youth who see the truth and oppose the war.

About 20 workers and youth signed up to picket the local recruiting station. We want military recruiters out of our schools, but that's not enough. When the draft comes — when, not if — we want to organize workers and soldiers to turn the fight around against the warmakers once and for all. ☸

California Trucker Says It's A Fight for Survival

LOS ANGELES, May 25 — Thousands of truck drivers either work for a company or “own” their own trucks—in debt up to their eyeballs to a bank. They work the ports here, Long Beach and Oakland, moving millions of tons of goods weekly in and out of California, the sixth largest economy in the world. Those in LA and Long Beach ports move more merchandise, much of it from China, than any other U.S. port.

These truckers are a crucial link in the production chain, moving materials from the factories and ports to points throughout the country. That's why, when they take to the streets demanding better conditions, the liberals rulers — through the AFL-CIO and other community-based organizations like Hermandad Mexicana Latinoamericana — try to control the drivers' organizing campaign. They want to confine their discontent within the limits of the capitalist system.

Part of the attack on these drivers is racist. In the LA area, the great majority of the drivers are Latino immigrant workers. The other part of the attack is the imperialist war. The big bosses are driving for maximum profits through high diesel costs, low wages and many taxes to pay for their oil war.

At the California ports there are several groups of workers looking for the best way to organize themselves. Some already have established small committees. Others want to form one. In general, they see the need to organize against the big bosses' attacks.

The following is an interview with a truck driver who “owns” his truck.

Q: What are your demands?
A: That they lower the cost of diesel and raise the price they pay for cargo shipped by 30%. And that the intermediary companies (brokers) pay the road taxes and the insurance on the trucks.

Q: Does owning your own truck make you feel different from any other worker?

A: No. Look, the truck is just a tool for work. The average cost of a truck is \$25,000. The majority have only one truck and we owe the cost of it to the bank or to a credit card. We depend on the schedule and orders of the intermediary companies, the brokers. Some think they can escape from being poor like this, but those are just illusions.

Q: What is the average wage for a driver, a truck “owner,” in the ports?

A: Look, I work and drive throughout California. If it's a good week, I make about \$900 for about 60 hours. After taking out for taxes, I make about \$14 an hour, with no benefits. The local drivers, who just drive inside Los Angeles, make even less.

Q: Do unionized drivers have it better?

A: We're still looking for the best option. Many drivers don't trust the Teamsters. But maybe we'd better find out more and understand that they would just be “intermediaries” with whom you have to negotiate to get a little more.

Q: Why are you a truck driver?

A: My other option would be McDonalds. Unfortunately, the poverty and hunger we inherited from



those who came before us has left us with no choice but to fight to survive. We'll be carrying this load until we organize against the system. I believe we need a new world.

These drivers, like industrial workers and others, can play a key role in liberating the working class. The rulers and their politicians will try to win them to fascism and to support imperialist wars. But independently of whether they join in a union or a community organization, our main role is to win them to join the revolutionary communist movement to destroy this capitalist system with its poverty and wars. The attacks against them open up many to this outlook.☸

Small NJ Town Opposes Sending Guard to Iraq



RED BANK, NJ, May 23 — Rocked by Iraqi opposition to its invasion, torture and mass killings, the Bush regime announced in March that many National Guard units were being sent to Iraq, including the 2nd Division, virtually all of the New York and New Jersey Guard.

On May 22, about 40 people picketed the Army-Navy-Air Force recruiting station on Monmouth St. here to protest sending the Guard out of state for the first time in living memory. Passersby in cars and on foot waved, honked horns, and cheered. Not a single person made a hostile remark! There's little support for the war here.

Pickets and marchers chanted spirited slogans. Most were pacifist or anti-Bush, but Kerry had few defenders here. A few marchers started anti-imperialist chants which the group readily picked up, confirming that many are open to anti-capitalist ideas.

Highlight of the picket, march and rally were two short speeches by a young woman from the NJ Guard protesting being sent to Iraq. She's filing for C.O. (Conscientious Objector) status on grounds that this war is immoral. She declared that Guard members' “free speech” is curtailed. She listed what she's “not allowed to say,” thereby saying them without actually affirming them.

The march went through downtown Red Bank, then back to the recruiting station and a concluding rally at the railroad station. Over \$100 was raised for the young Guardswoman's legal expenses.

The large turnout for such a small NJ town and the enthusiastic reception proves that the ruling-class brutality has helped many people see through their illusions. A few CHALLENGES were seen in marchers' hands. While it's good that this Guardswoman expresses her anti-war sentiments, it would be better if soldiers opposed to the war organized inside the military. We must work hard to build communist ideas among all those who are disgusted by U.S. rulers' war on workers, at home and abroad.☸

Bush's 'Mission Accomplished': Timkin Lays off 1,300

CANTON, OHIO, May 19 — “The future of this company is bright and therefore, the future of employment is bright for the families that work here.” That's what Bush told the workers at the Timkin company here just 13 months ago, pushing his tax cuts, which he said would “spur the economy.”

The “bright future” has become a “Mission Accomplished.” Timkin, the city's largest employer, is shutting its doors and laying off 1,300 workers here. “How can I afford to get married, afford a house payment, maybe kids, if I don't have a job?” said Timkin worker Shawn Higgins. (Canton TV News channel 5, 5/19)

These mass layoffs are “a devastating blow to Canton.” The company is a \$4 billion producer of steel, alloys, bearings, etc., with 26,000 workers in 27 countries. Company boss W. R. Timkin gives the standard capitalist reason for the shut-down — “have to keep up with the competition” — and will shift work to lower-wage plants.

Ohio has lost 200,000 jobs since Bush became president. Meanwhile, boss Timkin raked in \$2.6 million in salary last year and will get a \$59,000 tax break from Bush's tax cuts that were supposed to “spur the economy.” “Incidentally,” Timkin raised \$600,000 in one night for Bush's

re-election campaign. One hand certainly does wash the other.

Rather than listening to, and cheering, Bush's (or any other politician's) patriotic lies, Timkin workers should be fighting like hell against these attacks, and joining in solidarity with their brothers and sisters in all of Timkin's other plants to prevent the bosses from using one group against another.

No matter who is president, capitalism grinds down workers according to the laws of the free market. To “stay competitive,” bosses must seek maximize profits or their rivals will drive them under. Workers produce the value from which those profits are derived. To increase profits, bosses must lower the cost of the labor that produces them, moving to ever-lower-wage areas — from the U.S. to Mexico to China and back to prison labor in the U.S. This is the source of poverty and mass unemployment in all capitalist countries.

The only real solution for Timkin's workers and all workers is to destroy the profit system that creates these intolerable conditions. That's what communist revolution is all about.☸

NEW T-SHIRT!

Put forward a revolutionary line this summer at the Democratic and Republican Conventions with Progressive Labor Party's White T-Shirt that reads:

REVOLT! DON'T VOTE
SIZES: M, L, XL

Available June 2nd.
Send \$10 (Check or Money Order to:
CHALLENGE PERIODICALS
PO Box 808
Brooklyn, NY 11202



LETTERS

A Communist’s Trip Into Voter Registration Land

On Saturday, May 8, I rode with two dozen NYC members of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) on a bus to Philadelphia where we joined hundreds of other trade unionists from 1199, IBEW and other unions to register voters in this “swing state.” I’ve been active in our union’s political affairs for about eight years, but this was my first attempt to deal with registering voters to oppose an incumbent president.

From PLP’s point of view, my main purpose was to develop better relationships with some fellow UFT members, discuss commonly-raised aspects of communism, sell some CHALLENGES and increase my union activism. It was a full day — we left at 7 A.M. and got home at 10 that night.

On the trip to Philadelphia, I got out a few CHALLENGES, sang the pro-Soviet World War II song “Stalin Wasn’t Stalin” to a group of teachers, and had an argument about the Soviet leader. Upon arrival, we joined about 400 workers from the other unions in an activity the leaders entitled, “Move It.” They didn’t call for Kerry’s election, just for Bush’s defeat. Despite the absence of Kerry signs or buttons, to punctuate their election choice a main speaker related her struggle to persuade her mother to vote against Bush. She finally won, but the mother now wants to vote for Nader, so now she’s struggling with her to vote for a Democrat who’s “more likely to win.”

In going door-to-door, our UFT group registered nearly 100 people. I must confess I had terribly mixed feelings. In 40 years I’ve only voted once, and then for a protest candidate. I did, however, get better acquainted with my companions on the journey. They didn’t feel too confident about voting for Kerry, although they weren’t quite ready to say people shouldn’t vote. Some felt Kucinich would have been better, but felt nobody would have voted for him.

After a full day’s work, on the bus trip back I was applauded when I sang a revolutionary song, “The World Is Overburdened With the Idle and the Rich.” Most of these people have seen Party members active on the floor of the Delegate Assembly. Although most on the bus were members of the union’s ruling Unity caucus, many appreciate our honesty and integrity. They’re not ready to join, but are really pleased that we’re part of the UFT.

All in all, it was a good day. We’d become quite comradely after so many hours together. You really have to “be in it to win it.”

RED TEACHER

Homeland Security Motto: ARREST! ARREST!

Conditions are changing qualitatively in terms of developing fascism, Homeland Security and the repressive apparatus. The FBI’s Counter Terrorism Division, with a foreign and domestic structure, is investigating anti-war groups. Thousands of wiretaps have been executed under the Foreign Intelligence Security Act (FISA) Court. These are secret, “unconstrained” wiretaps. All the intelligence gathered goes directly to criminal investigations.

There are also National Security letters from the Attorney General’s office. They’re not issued through the FISA Court, require



no judge’s order and no “reasonable” basis. Thousands are being sent out to look at bank records, hacking into computers to monitor keystrokes, phone taps, and breaking and entering into homes. And it’s a federal crime for your bank or phone company to tell you you’re being watched.

Michael Chertoff used to be #3 at the Department of Justice. He’s now on the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C. and on the fast track to the Supreme Court. He recently asked the question, “Now that we can collect huge amounts of intelligence, what should we do with it?” His answer? “ARREST!” He called for “creating the legal architecture” to make it easier to arrest U.S. citizens, and advocated using the threat of being held as an “enemy combatant” to get “suspects” to talk. He said this method has already proven successful with immigrants who’ve been arrested.

After the elections, there’ll be an increase in the repressive apparatus, no matter who’s elected. We must fight the illusion of waiting on the “big event,” for Hitler to be elected. The objections raised by the Democrats and the ACLU to the Patriot Act or Patriot Act II are over form, not content. The train has already left the station on 9/11.

MID-WEST READER

Anti-war Jogger Talks; GIs Listen

Usually about 30 to 40 people attend regular meetings of the liberal peace group I’ve belonged to for several years. Recently there’s been much debate over strategy because some people are pushing hard to “defeat George Bush” but others rightly see Kerry as another war-maker who doesn’t share their values.

At the last meeting, each person stated briefly what would most energize him or her. I said we should start outreaching to people in the military and their families.

I’ve said this before, drawing little reaction, but this time was different. Half a dozen people sat up in their seats and said “Yes!” Several others repeated my idea when they spoke.

Later, someone told a story about an incident on her morning jog. Coming around a corner, she encountered a group of reservists jogging towards her, chanting cadences. Startled, she called out to them, “Be kind to the Iraqi people!” The next lap around, she was better prepared, and started saying the same thing in cadence. To her surprise, they stopped their cadence and listened to her.

The publicity over the horrible photos of tortured Iraqi prisoners, as well as the fact that other soldiers exposed them, has brought home to many people that it matters a whole lot what soldiers think and do.

This peace group may be willing to encourage some sort of resistance to imperialist butchery. And both the soldiers and the peace organizers can learn a lot from such work.

PEACE GROUP MEMBER

From Silent Vigils To Militant Rallies

When Bush declared the Iraq war “over” last year, many people who had participated in “peace vigils” and large protests were discouraged. Only a few of the hundreds of regular weekly vigils continued, with smaller numbers of people. Over the last month, though — after Falluja, and the wide exposure of the torture photos — the mood is changing.

Several members of my church have organized a new vigil at a government building where lots of people wait in line to enter. Instead of silently holding signs, we take turns giving short speeches. Recently, before we went out, we exchanged ideas about the outrageous treatment of Iraqi prisoners, and how the torrent of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim war propaganda had created the climate for it. I said that black and Latin people imprisoned in the U.S. suffered the same kind of racist abuse right here. Two of my friends agreed, and this became one of the main themes of our small rally that day. Most of the folks waiting in line listened intently, more than the week before when we talked only about Iraq. Many nodded in agreement, and several Latina workers applauded.

Some other people I know are organizing another new regular protest. One is a young worker, originally from the Mideast, who reminded me that we had talked at a street-corner rally over a year ago. Then she mainly wanted to dump Saddam Hussein. She remembered what I had said then, about the U.S. having no plan to replace him with anything better, and about the real reason for the war being control of oil profits. Since then, she has spent a great deal of time on the Internet, getting and sharing information. She’s totally against the war. She wants to get some of her friends to help with the new “peace vigil” and perhaps meet as a discussion group.

It’s a long way from peace vigils to revolution, and most of my friends are not very far along that road. Some are joining the Kerry campaign. But the worst mistake we could make would be to underestimate the impact we can have during these difficult times. In my experience, when we put our ideas forward, on whatever level, people generally respond well to them. This can open up more opportunities.

ANTI-IMPERIALIST WAR ACTIVIST

The Myth of Ghouliani

The “testimony” of former NYC Mayor Rudy Giuliani before the commission “investigating” 9/11, and the commissioners’ “questioning” of Giuliani is a case study of ruling-class hypocrisy. The day before, one commission member had described the city’s crisis coordination and communications system as “not worthy of the Boy Scouts.” Yet when Ghouliani appeared, he was fawned over, praised as a “hero,” handled with kid gloves and never asked any sharp questions, causing the wife of one victim to condemn the panel for “letting Rudy Giuliani polish his crown.”

It was the families of those killed on 9/11 who challenged the Ghouliani “hero” myth. One was hustled out when she shouted, “3,000 people murdered does not mean leadership....Let me ask the real questions.” “Liar!” yelled another.” Said the mother of one dead firefighter, “My son was murdered because of your incompetence!” Another relative kept challenging Ghouliani and the Commission with, “Ask about why the CIA trained al Qaeda.” A sister of another dead firefighter shouted at the ex-mayor, “Talk about the radios.”

This last point exposes the city’s complicity in hundreds of unnecessary deaths. Firefighters charged that their radios didn’t function and therefore they could not communicate with other first responders or with any command posts, nor could they hear orders to evacuate the North tower after the South tower had collapsed. The firefighters say these faulty radios caused at least 100 unnecessary deaths. The firefighters’ death toll was 15 times that of the cops. Yet not one question was asked Ghouliani about these radios nor was any rank-and-file firefighter called to testify.

The radios that didn’t function on 9/11 were the same ones that didn’t function during the 1993 bombing. Several months before 9/11, the Ghouliani administration struck a no-bid, \$33 million deal with Motorola to purchase new digital radios over fire department objections. Never field-tested, designed for intelligence agencies needing encryption capabilities, they had no application on the fire ground. After repeated failures, some life-threatening, they had to be withdrawn. Firefighters were stuck with the old radios which hadn’t functioned properly in the 1993 bombing, were failure-prone in high-rise buildings and were incompatible with the police communications system.

Firefighters had called for a Grand Jury investigation of the no-bid Motorola deal, given the tendency of the ex-mayor’s administration to award contracts to rich political supporters. But that never happened either.

Nor did any commissioner question Ghouliani — given the 1993 bombing — about why he installed a \$13 million command “bunker” on the 21st floor of 7 World Trade Center. There a massive tank holding thousands of gallons of diesel fuel at ground level was connected to pipes running up to the command center, in violation of city codes. The fuel was ignited by debris from the Twin Towers, melting the building’s key supports and totally destroying it.

The rulers and their lackey politicians, including the 9/11 Commissioners, care not one whit for working people whose lives are destroyed by their worldwide imperialist adventures. The CIA trained and organized the fundamentalists’

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Big Bosses Finance ‘White-Skin Privilege’

The highest levels of the ruling class have decided to fund white skin privilege ideology —the capitalist idea that white workers are privileged or benefit from racism. (See CHALLENGE article ‘Circular Logic’ Dooms Working-Class Anti-Racist Struggle, 5/12/04) They know that this capitalist ideology doesn’t threaten their rule, as a communist-led, pro-working class, anti-racist movement would.

One promoter of this ideology is The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond. Based in New Orleans, it has trained 100,000, chiefly through its Undoing Racism workshops and forums. In 1996-1997, it established offices in Minnesota, Brooklyn, Seattle and Berkeley, CA. More recently, the Institute has “provided leadership for a new national Anti-Racism Training Institute, with sites in Albuquerque, Seattle, New Orleans and Broward County, FL.” (The People’s Institute web site)

Various ruling-class foundations have funded this rapid expansion. In 1997, the Charles Stewart Mott foundation invited The People’s Institute to Flint, Mich. to train “a diverse group of community leaders.” Within three years, The Institute was presenting its white skin privilege ideology to over 500 leaders in Flint, financed by an additional grant from the Mott foundation (Sojourners Magazine, 9/1/2000).

Charles Stewart Mott founded the C.S. Mott foundation in 1926. He was Vice-President of General Motors and a board member for 60 years until his death in 1973. This is the same General Motors that gutted Flint during the eighties by closing plant after plant, sending tens of thousands onto the streets.

GM, probably more than any other single corporation, devastated the black working class during the last decade. As with any other racist attack, white workers also suffered in huge

numbers as millions of industrial jobs were destroyed.

The Mott foundation, with assets of \$2 billion plus, is a premier ruling-class foundation. The present chair, president and CEO, William S. White was offered the job by his father-in-law Harding Mott, son of Charles. Other family relations fill the board, continuing GM’s “humanitarian” traditions.

Meanwhile, the Gotto Foundation of Minneapolis funded The Institute’s Minnesota office. Louis W. Hill, Jr., son of a railroad robber baron who founded the Great Northern Railroad, started the Gotto foundation. His son Louis F. Hill leads it today.

The People’s Institute West in Berkeley, CA. “was made possible by funding from the Grousbeck Family Foundation (The People Institute West web site),” which can be contacted c/o H.I. Grousbeck, Stanford Graduate School of Business.

The San Francisco Foundation provides grants for operating expenses. With \$700 million in assets, it’s the one of the country’s largest community foundations. Founded by Daniel Koshland, former CEO of Levi Strauss from 1922-1979, the SF foundation board of trustees includes vice-chair Peter E Haas, Jr., another heir to the Levi Strauss fortune.

Peter’s brother Robert was Levi Strauss CEO from 1984-1999, and Chairman of the Board since 1989. He’s a member of the Trilateral Commission, the Council on Foreign Relations, and a trustee of the Brookings Institution.

Meanwhile, the chair of the Koshland Awards Committee of the SF Foundation, Michael Omi, holds positions at UC Berkeley, the University of Washington, the University of Minnesota and the advisory board of the Rockefeller Foundation.

All in all, it’s a ruling-class project.☛

MORE LETTERS

“jihad” in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union, creating the very gang that engineered the 9/11 attack. This was the avowed policy of the Carter administration and all its successors. They are murdering thousands of Iraqis and hundreds of GIs today. Torture and death are too good for these imperialist bastards.

A BROOKLYN OLD-TIMER

China, PLP and the 20th Century

The article “New Communist International Movement Must Bury Dark Ages,” (CHALLENGE, 12/17/03) states that the three most important events of the 20th Century were the 1917 communist-led Russian Revolution, the Soviet Red Army’s defeat of the Nazi war machine in World War II, and the collapse of the old communist movement. But there should have been at least three other most important events of the last century — the communist-led Chinese Revolution, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the birth of a New International Communist Movement led by PLP that fights for communism.

It’s not this writer’s intention to spell out the details of why these events were just as important, or more so, than the collapse of the old communist movement. But not to consider for this honor the Chinese Revolution — that for some years put one-fourth of humanity under communist leadership and proved that so-called backward, “third world,” non-white people could be won to the most advanced communist line of the times — could be misconstrued as PLP being racist and having a slanted Eurocentric view of history.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was also a major milestone on the exploited masses’ road to revolution. It helped propel the understanding of revolutionary theory and practice to greater heights, especially the primacy of ideology over material incentives. Out of this struggle and the political debate it engendered, came PLP’s Road to Revolution III, an indis-

pensable prerequisite for the most advanced line the communist movement has yet produced, Road to Revolution IV.

Lastly is the emergence of PLP which has not only kept the red flag of revolution flying high, but has made tremendous contributions to revolutionary theory and has begun building a fledgling new communist international. This despite the collapse of the old communist movement when the working class seems to be in a quagmire of cynicism, religious and nationalist fanaticism, and while the rulers of the world plunder and butcher at will. PLP has great potential and represents the best advance for the international working class since the collapse of the old movement. We have a long way to go, and face titanic battles, but we’re building on a strong foundation, and on the shoulders of giants.

A COMRADE

Printing Prison Photo A Mistake

The excellent front-page article (CHALLENGE, 5/26) “Torture under capitalism” makes the important point that “the imperialists’ need for maximum profits and control of oil makes racist intimidation and killing the primary mission of the U.S. Armed Forces.” However, it was a mistake to reprint the horrible photo of the soldier with an Iraqi man on a leash. Not only is it disgusting racist pornography, but it reinforces the rulers’ message that “a few bad soldiers” are to blame. The captioned cartoon in Desafio at least made a political point, but again, why not redraw the picture with an imperialist holding the leash? Graphics are very powerful. Even though some MP’s (some of them are also U.S. prison guards) have been won to carry out the bosses’ fascist attacks, the main culprits are the imperialists themselves. We must always be conscious that the message conveyed is consistent with the line of the accompanying article.

A COMRADE

 **RED EYE ON THE NEWS** 

BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS THAT CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION:Abbreviations:

NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly (UK)

LBJ/Vietnam = Bush/Iraq

Bush was asked about any comparisons of Iraq to Vietnam. He said, “The analogy is false.” By his own words....Bush is repeating the worst of Johnson.... Bush said: “America’s objective in Iraq is limited and it is firm. We seek and independent, free and secure Iraq.”

In 1966 Johnson said: “Our purpose is a limited one, and that is to permit self-determination for the people of South Vietnam.”

Bush said: “As a proud and independent people, Iraqis do not support an indefinite occupation, and neither does America. We’re not an imperial power.”

In 1968, Johnson said: “We seek neither territory nor bases, economic domination or military alliance in Vietnam. We fight for the principle of self-determination....

Bush said: “We will succeed in Iraq. We’re carrying out a decision that has already been made and will not change.”

In 1968, Johnson said: “So far as changing our basic strategy, the answer would be no.”

....Bush said: “Now is the time, and Iraq is the place, in which the enemies of the civilized world are testing the will of the civilized world.”

Johnson said in 1966: “The time is now, and the place is Vietnam.” (Boston Globe)

No majority rule on minimum wage

For the bottom 5 percent — the least-skilled, lowest-paid men and women....more than six million people — wages go up only when the minimum wage does....

The public is sympathetic....In a January poll...the Pew Research Center found that 94 percent of the 1,503 people questioned were in favor of an increase in the minimum wage.... (NYT, 5/16)

Black women Soldiers Are anti-war

The whole [prison] episode can

be reduced to....the systemic actions of an occupying institution....

Senator Ben Campbell said, “I don’t know how these people got into our army.”

....For the most part they joined to get paid, not because they believed in the war on terror. Indeed, the most over-represented demographic group in the military — African-American women — is the same group least likely to support the war in Iraq. (GW, 5/20)

Rob Palestinians of water

More than 80% of water from the West Bank goes to Israel. The Palestinians are allotted just 18% of the water that is extracted from their own land. Palestinian villages and farmers are monitored by meters fitted to pumps and punished for overuse. Jewish settlers....use 10 times as much water per capita as each Palestinian. (GW, 1/28)

India Election



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

ously, it had launched a border war against Mao’s China.

The two big fake leftist parties — the “Communist” Party of India (CPI) and the “Communist” Party Marxist (CPM) — drew 27 million votes and now control 60 seats (15%) in India’s Parliament). They have been and will be particularly helpful to the bosses. Since 1977, the CPM has run the state of West Bengal. It also runs Kerala. While both parties pay lip service to fighting privatization and globalization, the CPM has wooed major investments from technology companies like IBM, guaranteeing labor peace, curbing strikes. More important, it has developed capitalism in the countryside.

But the majority of the 387 million Indians who voted to oust the BJP will soon realize that whatever crumbs they get won’t end their hellish conditions. Since independence and partition in 1947 (when the British divided the subcontinent into India and Pakistan), the Congress Party and the Indian bosses overall have been unable to eliminate the caste system, Communalism (pogroms against the 150 million Moslems), hunger, wars, and unemployment. Tens of millions of workers and peasants consider themselves communists but are being betrayed by fake-leftists. It’s time to fight for revolutionary communism. That’s PLP’s goal.☛

Imperialism Creates Gangs, Then Burns Youth Alive

It was like a scene out of Dante's inferno — 103 young people incinerated alive by a fire in a Honduras jail. Although blood-curdling, we shouldn't be surprised. One hundred and eighty-two youth jammed into a cell meant for 50. When the fire broke out, the jailers first refused to let them out. Some survived with first degree burns but most died, trapped in the fire.

The rulers throughout Central America have a long history as mass murderers, learning well from their Washington masters. After all, John Negroponte, the new U.S. ambassador to Iraq, developed the torture methods used against Iraqi and Afghan prisoners when he was ambassador to Honduras during the region-wide civil war. The bosses have killed hundreds of thousands of workers and youth — many of them Indians and dark-skinned — to protect their political and economic power. This can only end when our Party can expand throughout Central America and organize the working class to take state power to build communism!

Besides physical genocide amid the worst material conditions, the capitalists murder us with their poisonous ideologies. Thus, in Central America they've won

thousands — in Honduras alone, possibly 40,000 — to belong to hated street gangs called "maras." These gangs use and deal drugs, slaughter each other and terrorize the general population.

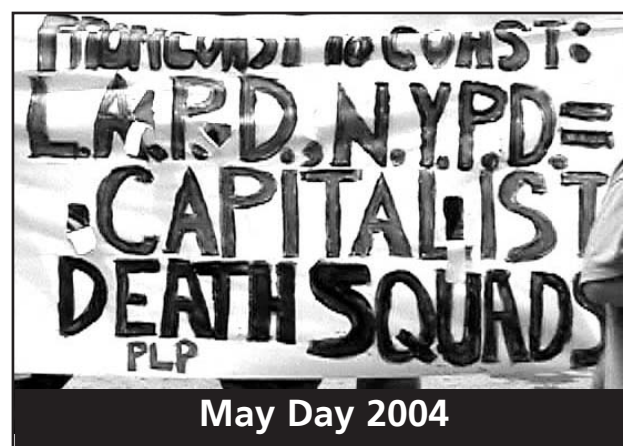
They had never existed in Central America, even when there was no communist movement to inspire working-class youth to engage in class war instead of drugs and crime. This was the case in Honduras from early 1900s until 1954 when the Honduras Communist Party (HCP) was founded. These gangs are a product of capitalism in decay and in particular of the decline of US imperialism.

These "Maras" are a direct export of US imperialism. In the 80s the US bosses inundated the Latin and black working class neighborhoods in the US with crack cocaine in order to fund their Contra War against the Sandinistas and to divert unemployed, rebellious youth in the US. This produced hundreds of thousands of drug addicts and gave rise to vicious gangs and gang warfare for the control of the drug traffic. Thousands of youth have been killed and hundreds of thousands more jailed, brutalized and put to work for pennies an hour.

After serving their sentences, some of these gang members were deported to Central America. That is how the Maras got their start, as the US ruling class exported their strategy of dealing with potentially one of the most revolutionary sectors of the working class.

In Central America, this US policy seems to work wonders for the bosses. They have been able to win these youth to become enemies of the working class. They don't want a repeat of the 70s and 80s when national liberation insurrection was in the air and tens of thousands of youth in their early teens joined the armed struggle against the US backed regimes in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Honduras never had an insurrectionary situation, even though the conditions cry out for communist revolution. But the youth in Honduras never heard this cry because the HCP never fought for insur-



rection or communism. While others did fight for insurrection, they did not fight for communism. But the working class youth is our future and hope. When inspired, they bring enthusiasm, audacity, and creativity to the struggle. It's our responsibility to rescue them from the jaws of the bosses and win them to our Party. Let the murders of the youth in the Honduran prison, along with the murders and tortures in Iraqi and US prisons, cause us to strengthen our commitment to build PLP internationally to bury all the murderers of our youth! ☛

Newly-elected Dominican President Follows IMF Bankers' Rules

SANTO DOMINGO, Dom. Republic, May 20 — "Pa'fuera es que van" (Out they go) was the most popular slogan (even turned into a popular Merengue song) during the recent electoral campaign here. It came true — the very unpopular President Hipólito Mejía lost his re-election bid. Former President Leonel Fernández won 56% of the vote in the first round. People didn't vote FOR Fernandez but rather AGAINST Mejía, under whose government the economy went downhill. Mejía blamed everything on the collapse of the world economy (the dot.com boom of the late 90s went bust when he became President). This is partially true, but his ineptness and government corruption didn't help.

In 2003, the country "plunged into recession, mainly as a result of the \$2.2 billion collapse of the Banco Intercontinental, one of the country's biggest banks, and allegations of cronyism and disastrous lending policies.... The affair has shattered business confidence, triggered capital flight and eroded reserves. Gross Domestic Product declined 0.4% in 2003 and is expected to decline a further 1% this year." (London Financial Times, 5/13).

Because of the bank bailout, the peso lost over 40% of its value against the dollar this year. Inflation soared; prices are expected to rise 50% in 2004.

Newly-elected President Fernandez and his Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) took advantage of the population's anger. Several mass general strikes against the Mejía government occurred in the last year. In the most recent one, Dominican Army troops which had just returned from Iraq were sent to quell street demonstrators. After Spain's government took its troops out of Iraq, the 300+ Dominican troops also returned.

Mejía split his own Dominican Revolutionary Party by turning against its no-continuous-re-election-of-Presidents rule. Additionally, his rude personality and erratic public interviews got him nicknamed "El Mulo de Gurabo" (the Mule from Gurabo, his hometown).

Many hope Fernandez will change things. When his PLD ran the country (1996-2000), their "national liberation" politics turned sharply to the right. Free market and privatization of public enterprises became the norm. Many government officials got rich from the privatization. The state-owned electrical utility was sold at a bargain to Enron and Spanish energy companies, but the constant blackouts didn't end as promised. The PLD's unpopularity grew and was nicknamed the "eat-alone" gang (they shared with no one but their own clique). They lost the 2000 elections to Mejía.

Now Fernandez will follow capitalism's rules. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is demanding the government sign an austerity plan to obtain loans. This will surely happen no matter who runs the government since the IMF even has an official in the Dominican Central Bank.

For the first time, Dominican immigrants overseas were able to vote; 16,000 did so in the NYC Metropolitan area (overwhelmingly for Fernandez). The \$2 billion these immigrants send home each year help keep the Dominican economy afloat. These immigrant workers in the U.S. are being squeezed by low wages and high prices. They must sacrifice to help feed their families. Fernandez promised many things to these immigrants. But like their relatives back home, they shouldn't expect anything from Fernandez's government.

The frustration felt by workers and youth in the Dominican Republic — having to choose between bad and worse — is occurring worldwide. The fact that workers are forced over and over to choose between rotten capitalist politicians show that we in PLP must redouble our revolutionary efforts to make sure this changes ASAP. ☛

387 Million Vote in India But Capitalist Horror Marches On

The recent defeat of the right-wing Hindu nationalist BJP party-led coalition in India has been called a victory over free markets and globalization. While hundreds of millions voted against them, the winning Congress Party will not obey this popular mandate.

Sonia Gandhi (the Italian-born head of the Congress Party) decided not to become Prime Minister — even though her Party's rank and file begged her to take it. Her decision has as much to do with fears for her life (her husband, Sanjiv and her mother-in-law, Indira, were both murdered in the job), as with pressure from The City (London's stock market), Wall Street and the local bourgeoisie to get one of their own there. However, Manmohan Singh, 71, the new PM was a Governor of the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank. He will be the first Sikh to lead India. "As Finance Minister from 1991 to 1996 under Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, the white-bearded Singh rescued India from financial crisis and put its old socialist economy [read: state capitalist] on the path to free-market reform." (Business Week, 5/31)

The losing BJP government called its electoral campaign "India Shines," given that the economy was growing 8% a year and that Bangalore and other areas attract information technology investors from all over the world. This is enriching well-educated Indians and reaping super-profits for IBM, Intel, HSBC, Delta Airlines, Microsoft and other international capitalists. But conditions for most Indians are going from bad to worse.



Agriculture is a mess — in recent years 8,000 poor peasants committed suicide because of bankruptcy. While India graduates 2.5 million students from college annually, and probably more engineers than any other country, non-university schools are a disaster. "Nearly 40% of Indians remain illiterate. Unemployment... is estimated at 7% to 10%, and with 10 million entering the workforce each year, joblessness will worsen.... 223 million Indians live in hunger, more than in all of Africa, consuming less than 1960 calories per day." (BW).

The bosses fear rebellions, particularly after the February 50-million-strong general strike almost became an uprising in many areas. So the Congress Party is much better for the bosses now. It will make some changes, mainly to benefit capitalism: build the infrastructure, invest more in agriculture and public education. Also, many local bosses fear China becoming Asia's superpower and have more confidence the Congress Party can handle that rivalry. When it was in power previ-

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